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"solar constant" observations in forecasting weather. Dr. C. G. Abbott, director of the work, also describes the successful operation on Mt. Wilson, California, of a solar cooker devised by him. With this apparatus it was possible, using only the sun's heat, to cook bread, meat, vegetables, and preserves.

Mr. H. C. Raven represented the Smithsonian on an extensive collecting expedition through Africa from south to north. Although many difficulties were encountered, among others a railway wreck in which two members of the expedition were killed, Mr. Raven shipped to the institution much interesting zoological material, which was greatly needed for purposes of comparison in working up the famous Roosevelt and Rainey collections already in the National Museum. Many interesting photographs of the animals, the natives, and the country itself are shown in this account and in that of Dr. Shantz, who accompanied the expedition as a botanical collector. In Australia, a Smithsonian naturalist collected, through the generosity of Dr. W. L. Abbott, specimens of the fast disappearing remarkable fauna of the continent, while Dr. Abbott himself secured a great number of plants, birds, and other natural history material for the National Museum, in various regions of Haiti. A number of other zoological and botanical expeditions are briefly described and illustrated.

BIRDS BANDED BY THE BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

Persons engaged in outdoor activities, whether or not trained bird observers, are requested to cooperate with the Bureau of Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture, by furnishing data to supplement the bird-banding work that is being conducted by the bureau. When any one happens to capture a banded bird or to come upon one that has been hurt or killed, it will be of great assistance to the investigations of the department to have a report made of the facts by returning the band (if the bird is dead; otherwise the band should not be removed, but its number noted), together with details as to when and where the bird was found.

The aluminum bands issued by the Biological Survey carry the abbreviation "Biol. Surv." and a serial number on one side, and "Wash., D. C." on other. But as other bands have been used on a large number of birds by various individuals and institutions, it would be advisable for anyone finding a bird that carries a band not marked as above indicated, or of which the address is not clearly understood, to forward the information to the Biological Survey, where every effort will be made to locate the person responsible. These bands are placed on the bird's tarsus, the bare portion of the leg immediately above the toes.

Experts in bird work are using the banding method to solve a variety of problems relative to the migrations and life histories of our native birds which are thus approached from the aspects of the individual birds. Some of the more important questions that can be solved by banding operations are: How fast do the individuals of any species travel on their periodic migrations; does any one flock continue in the van or is the advance made by successive flocks passing one over the other in alternate periods of rest and flight? Do individuals of any species always follow the same route, and is it identical for both spring and fall flights? Do migrating birds make the same stop-overs every year to feed? How long do birds remain in one locality during the migration, the breeding, or the winter seasons? Do birds adopt the same nesting area, nest site, and winter quarters during successive seasons? For how many broods will one pair remain matted, and which bird, if not both, is attracted next year to the old nesting site? How far from their nests do birds forage for food; and, after the young have left the nest, will the parent birds bring them to the feeding and trapping station? How long do birds live?

A minimum of 100,000 banded birds is planned, from which it is hoped that valuable information will be obtained in regard to the habits of migratory birds.

SCIENTIFIC ITEMS

WE record with regret the death of Winthrop E. Stone, since 1900 president of Purdue University, and previously professor of chemistry; of Edmond Perrier, director of the Paris Museum of Natural History; of Gabriel Lippman, professor of physics in the University of Paris, and of Professor Viktor von Lang, formerly professor of physics at Vienna.

THE MATHEMATICAL Association of America and the American Mathematical Society will hold their summer meetings at Wellesley College, September 6-7 and 7-9, respectively. Two joint sessions will be devoted to a symposium on "Relativity." On the afternoon of the seventh, Professor Pierpont, of Yale University, will give a paper entitled "Some mathematical aspects of the theory of relativity," while on the forenoon of the eighth, Professor Lunn, of the University of Chicago, will speak on "The place of the Einstein theory in theoretical physics."

THE Municipal Observatory at Des Moines, Iowa, which is said to be the only municipal observatory in the world, was opened on August 1. The observatory building is to be equipped by Drake University with an 8-inch equatorial telescope. It is to be under the control of the university and open to the public at least three times a week, and at any other time when occasion may warrant.

A NEW forest experiment station, the first in the Eastern States, has been established at Asheville, N. C., by the Forest Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. Steady depletion of the Southern Appalachian timber supply has been responsible for the location of this station in the East, and the object of the work to be conducted will be to secure the information needed by foresters to determine the best methods of handling forest lands in the southern mountains.